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Senator Joe Hune  
Chairman, Senate Agriculture Committee  
State of Michigan  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Senator Hune:

My name is Frances Schuleit, and I am a resident of the state of Michigan, and a registered nurse with experience in large academic teaching hospitals. I spent the last 20 years of my nursing career with the national healthcare accrediting body, the Joint Commission, and most recently, at Spectrum Health. My new vocation has been in public service, and I serve on our city council in Greenville. I am writing to you as a private citizen to ask that you pass SB 423 and 424.

In 2009-2010, I worked actively with Montcalm County Commissioners as chairperson of the Commissioner-appointed animal control advisory committee. Our charges were to evaluate two key areas and to propose alternate methods of operation. One of the primary recommendations that our committee made was to eliminate the practice of gas chamber euthanasia. It did not take long for our Commissioners to analyze the data we presented, and to conclude that the practice needed to be discontinued.

Specific rationale for elimination of the gas chamber included:

- Inefficiency and ineffectiveness of gas chamber
- Safety concerns for staff
- Cost analysis of gas chamber vs. euthanasia by injection (EBI)
- Availability of free training for EBI
- Image of the county animal control and county administration in general
- Emotional welfare of staff
- Inhumane practice of gas chamber

Before this action was taken, many county officials, staff, and volunteer committee members had spent inordinate amounts of time on the issue of gas euthanasia, taking away from their primary responsibilities. For nearly thirty years, private citizens and animal activists had cried out to public officials about the inhumane practices of gas chamber euthanasia, attending meetings of the Board of Commissioners, Law Enforcement and Courts Committee, Finance and Personnel Committee, and others. Literally thousands of hours had been taken up by this issue, and this can be verified in the minutes of the respective committees. As a citizen of Montcalm County, I would like my commissioners to spend time on all of the issues affecting our county's citizens. If inhumane practices had been banned years ago, all of this valuable time

might have been spent on planning for economic growth and development, rather than backpedaling during challenging times.

Neighboring counties which had eliminated gas euthanasia allowed us to visit and shared their resources with us. We found that making positive change is much easier now, and readily accepted by the staff and Commissioners. Among the improvements that were instituted since gas chamber euthanasia was discontinued are:

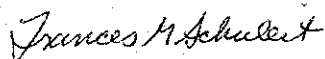
- Training for staff on euthanasia by injection
- Development and Implementation of Veterinary Plan for Disease Management, including vaccination and parasite control
- Development of initial set of comprehensive policies and procedures
- Lost and Found program in place using volunteers to take and post photos on internet website
- Partnership with Spay Neuter Program
- Development of volunteer program framework
- Community Outreach programs and activities in initial stage of discussion
- Initial Fund Raising discussions
- Initial discussions regarding Customer Service
- Rabies prevention clinics
- Growth of partnerships with rescue groups
- Improved public support
- Improved signage
- Customer friendly hours of operation
- Carcass disposal by cremation service
- Minor facilities improvements and ventilation

Even though there are only four counties remaining in Michigan who practice gas chamber euthanasia, this legislation is important in order to bring our state up to current national standards. We have state of the art legislation in other areas, yet we continue to allow the practice of smothering people's pets.

Animals should not have to suffer the indignity, pain, and inhumane treatment that has been widely reported and documented. To continue the practice of gas euthanasia anywhere will continue to fracture the spirit of the people of Michigan. It is time to bring Michigan law up to date, and discontinue the antiquated practice of gas chamber euthanasia.

I ask you to pass SB 423 and 424, to make Michigan more humane, for all of its residents. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Frances M. Schuleit

Cc: Senator Judy Emmons, Representative Rick Outman